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ZNR UUUUU ZZH
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FM AMEMBASSY DHAKA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5627
INFO RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 9371
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL KOLKATA 1012
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 0300
RUEHGO/AMEMBASSY RANGOON 2603
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 8173
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RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 1899
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 0399
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0580
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0030
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUEKDIA/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC
RHHMUNA/USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC

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DEPT FOR SES-O
DEPT FOR SCA/PB, SCA/EX
DCHA/OFDA FOR ROBERT THAYER
AID/W FOR AA MARK WARD AND ANE ANNE DIX
DCHA/FFP FOR MATTHEW NIMS AND PAUL NOVICK
ROME FOR FODAG
BANGKOK FOR RDM/A TOM DOLAN, ROB BARTON
KATHMANDU FOR USAID OFDA BILL BERGER AND SUE MCINTYRE
TREASURY FOR ELIZABETH WEISS AND SUSAN CHUN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAID](#) [PREL](#) [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [AMGT](#) [SOCI](#) [ECON](#) [PINR](#) [EAGR](#) [SENV](#)
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SUBJECT: USAID/OFDA Cyclone Sidr Situation Report #3: The Impact of Cyclone Sidr on Food Security and Emergency Food Needs

11. Summary. In response to Tropical Cyclone Sidr in Bangladesh, USAID deployed a Disaster Assistance Response Team (USAID/DART) to assess the humanitarian situation on the ground, provide recommendations on priority needs, and coordinate relief efforts with the U.S. Department of Defense, USAID/Bangladesh, and the U.S. Embassy in Dhaka. In its initial assessment, the USAID/DART has identified food assistance as the top priority need for cyclone-affected populations. The U.N. initial rapid assessment team reported that 2.2 million people will require food assistance due to the impact of the cyclone on local food security. On November 24, an advisor from USAID's Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP) joined the USAID/DART in Bangladesh to assess the emergency food situation and provide comprehensive recommendations. End Summary.

HUMANITARIAN CONDITIONS IN CYCLONE-AFFECTED AREAS

12. On November 15, 2007, Tropical Cyclone Sidr made landfall in southern Bangladesh with winds of 155 miles per hour. Rainfall and flooding resulting from the storm damaged infrastructure andQ destroyed homes, particularly affecting the southern coastal districts of Barguna, Bagerhat, Patuakhali, and Pirojpur. As of November 23, the Government of Bangladesh's (GOB) Disaster Management Bureau and the U.N. World Food Program (WFP) reported that the cyclone had killed 3,033 people, led to the disappearance of 1,828 others, and damaged nearly 1.2 million homes. In addition,

heavy rains from the storms destroyed nearly 1.7 million acres of agricultural lands, negatively impacting local food security and livelihoods. Information on affected populations and more detailed analysis of humanitarian needs are unfolding, as GOB, U.N., non-governmental organization (NGO), and donor assessment missions are still ongoing.

EMERGENCY FOOD NEEDS FOR AFFECTED POPULATIONS

¶3. During its initial assessment of cyclone-affected areas in southern Bangladesh, the USAID/DART reports that emergency food aid is the highest priority for humanitarian assistance. Likewise, the U.N. rapid assessment team also cited food as the most important area for immediate, life-saving relief. According to the U.N. team, approximately 2.2 million people are in critical need of food aid due to destruction caused by Cyclone Sidr. On November 24, an advisor from USAID/FFP joined the USAID/DART in Bangladesh to assess the emergency food situation, provide comprehensive recommendations, attend coordination meetings with U.N. agencies, NGOs, and the GOB's Ministry of Food and Disaster Management.

¶4. According to WFP, strong winds and tidal surge resulting from the storm destroyed more than 1.6 million acres of cropland. The main crop damaged is rice, which is currently under cultivation from November 2007 to January 2008. Since many crops were ready for harvest, the impact of Cyclone Sidr was especially harmful on local food security. On November 22, the U.N. rapid assessment team reported that 25 percent of ready-to-harvest crops in the storm-affected areas were destroyed.

¶5. In the most affected areas, household reserves of food have been

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¶11. Through its public food distribution system, the GOB is providing rice to cyclone-affected populations. As of November 23, the GOB had allocated 7,640 MT of rice and distributed 27,000 food bags. However, the GOB has not released the exact amount of government food stockpiles available for distribution to affected populations.

¶12. On November 23, USAID officials attended a coordination meeting between the GOB and international donors, which was held at the GOB Ministry of Food and Disaster Management. At the meeting, GOB representatives stated that government food stocks are currently higher than they were last year at this time; however, recent flooding and the impact of Cyclone Sidr have devastated Bangladesh's agricultural cycles. The GOB stated that although current food stocks are "good," they may be depleted by March or April 2008. Furthermore, the next season's rice crop is not expected until May 2008. The GOB may be hesitant to tap into government stockpiles due to concerns over food security in the long-run.

¶13. India has announced a \$22 million contribution in food assistance comprising 40,000 MT of rice, 10,000 MT of wheat, and 1,000 MT of milk powder. Contingent on when these food commodities will arrive and whether they are allocated to cyclone-affected areas, this assistance could be significant in filling the food needs of victims of Cyclone Sidr.

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